



Aruba celebrates the Golden Anniversary of the Aruba's Airport being named after Queen Beatrix

On October 22, 1955, Prince Bernhard, father of the then Princess Beatrix, conducted the ceremony that officially change the name of Aruba's Airport from "Dakota" to the Princess Beatrix Airport. An avid pilot himself, it was fitting that he attend the ceremony to change name, which was based on the nearby aloe fields, into one to honor the woman that would eventually ascend to the throne as reigning monarch of the Dutch Kingdom.

For twenty-five years it was named after the princess, and then, twenty-five years ago, it was dubbed "Airport Reina Beatrix" or "Queen Beatrix Airport" when she claimed her royal title. In 1980, the year of her coronation, she visited Aruba and attended the official unveiling of the new building bearing her name. In recent years, the airport has been enormously expanded and modernized, but the name still stands, and in celebration of the airports golden anniversary, a number of events have been planned.

Beginning today, October 24, a competition for three local "Beatrixes" is underway. All Arubian women with the name Beatrix are encouraged to register for the register for the competition. Those that are chosen will receive the "Royal Treatment, fit for a Queen." To register call 524-2424 ext.170 for information, and entrants will accepted until December 4 2005.

In November, the Aruba Airport Authority volunteers will tackle various "hands on" projects with the children of the "Beatrix School," and beginning in December there will be an airport art contest for all school children in the grades from one to three. This will end on January 9, 2006.

For the students in classes four, five and six, there will be an essay contest, and the winner will be the 'Captain of the Day' earning them a number of prizes including a plane trip over the island.

Through the months of March and April, 2006 there will be an exposition of Beatrix memorabilia consisting of historic items and photos of Aruba and the airport in days gone by.

The final event of this six-month celebration will be an Open House at the airport for the celebration of Queen's Birthday on April 30, 2006, including guided tours of the newly renovated facility.

Airport Spokesman Ruben Trappenburg and Peter Steinmetz, Director of the Aruba Airport Authority presented this agenda to the press last week Friday. Press members were also treated to a celebratory box of Droste Chocolates, adorned with a picture of the Queen. So the sixth month celebration begins, with today's inaugural event. AAA congratulates the people of Aruba and the Royal Family on this historic occasion, and promises more detailed information about each individual event as the dates approach.